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COMING TO CHRIST.

A FORM.

BY WM. S. GREEN.

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COMING TO CHRIST.

A POEM.

W M. S. $\overset{\text{BY}}{\overset{\checkmark}{\bigcirc}}$ R E E N.

Come, for all things are now ready.—Luke, xiv. 17. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.—John, vi. 37.



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COMING TO CHRIST.

AGAINST the shore of time I press my ear
The ocean waves of endless life to hear,
And cheerful voices from a distant land,
Sweet as the music from an angel band,
Invite me home. The world is calling, too,
And offers happiness if I pursue
The fragrant paths her children's feet have made
From sunny morning to the evening shade.
"Oh, why," she cries, "should man the future dread?
Mine are the living,—mine the honored dead,—
My air and ocean sing their lullaby,
And on my lap in endless sleep they lie."

O earth, what countless forms of life in thee Are swept away, what ages yet to be Will bring from chaos more, like them to go In countless numbers! Art thou ever so,— A graveyard green, with decorations made For love departed; or art thou but arrayed In infant robes, and nature waits to plan A new creation as a home for man?

When wisdom works, her labors all combine, With one united voice, to show design;

And though to mortals she may seem employed Creating forms as if to be destroyed, Yet, close behind her path of ruin springs A nobler life, a better state of things.

When on the past we take a mental view, As if on starlit silence looking through, The brilliant progress of the greatest mind Seems but a meteor, with a trace behind.— A dying light, we linger to survey, And mark the spot where it has passed away. Yet such a one a spirit power possessed, By love made joyful, and by hate distressed. Unlike the brutes, which may be satisfied, It still craved more with all its wants supplied. Though blasted hopes fell thickly on the past, Its anxious looks were ever forward cast, And pride still urged it to pursue a way Of painful life where faded pleasures lay: And conscience stung it with a frequent dread Of future judgments on the quick and dead.

Does change or death await these powers I find,—This will, these feelings, and this thinking mind? Unlike the brutes, which only instinct moves, Whose art of life no lapse of time improves, Something we have where knowledge ever grows, And past and present and the future shows. Progressive man! What means this spreading fire Kindling in all our race such strong desire For immortality? What means this force, Unlike the brutes, to shape our moral course? Why is this high intelligence to show Man has the power the worlds above to know?

Behold his grasp! He counts the rolling spheres; Measures their distances; computes their years; Tells of their magnitudes; compares their weights; And from their faces shows their changing states. Lost in their wanderings from the failing sight, He makes new optics and improves the light, Pursues their orbits with a keener eve. And finds new worlds that fill an unknown sky. He marks duration of the earth in space By seams, and scars, and wrinkles on her face; Returns in art, what he has lost in age; Follows the forms of life through every stage; Changes their features; multiplies their use; Directs their motions; checks by law abuse; Catches the theme that fires the angels' songs; And though from age to age the time prolongs, He hopes to rise from the dissolving clod To claim an heirship in the wealth of God.

The powers of wit, and all the sparkling train Of subtleties and satires, strive in vain To check my aspirations for a state Of immortality so blest, so great. Let me with earnest dignity attend What conscience claims, and willing audience lend To that Eternal Teacher from above, Who warns with truth, and offers me his love.

I look to Heaven, and ask Him how to go. Then, startled at his voice within, I know That He has come to me. 'Tis thus He proves By evidence of signs of where He moves His spirit form, and access to my breast, And there He bids my trembling faith to rest.

'Tis thus the all-pervading Spirit shows The stream of truth, whence endless knowledge flows Forth from the Rock of Ages. Here, we drink Increasing power, to make us feel and think As witnesses for truth. Here, conscience gains Its quick discernment of our love, and trains The world to duty. When we think of man As image of his God, what better plan To show our origin, -- our good to find, --Than through the quickened spirit of mankind? As where no law is needed none is given, So is the truth that comes revealed from heaven. The laws of God all lifeless matter bind. And life to systems is by law confined; And jarring elements may not disturb The Maker's works, without a law to curb. When on the heart of man the Spirit moves, The work itself its holy nature proves. Those strong desires for man; that living trust In God for life; those judgments held as just; Those laws held pure that all our motives try; That wondrous knowledge of futurity; And more than all, that self-denying plan Of endless union between God and man, Must show this revelation comes from heaven, To be our guide, and for our comfort given. The good alone could feel and know such things. But if they falsely spake, it surely brings Upon themselves with other sinners too. The punishment to such an action due. Here every threat, and every promise given, Is but to aid our struggling way to heaven; And figures just, by Him who made the soul, Prompt some desires, and others they control.

Thus God his light upon our pathway sheds, And where most needed, there the darkness spreads. Worth more than heaven and earth, that word is sure, And though creation fail, it shall endure. The chain of proofs of countless links composed, That shows of God, and man to Him opposed, Joins immaterial to material things, And free from doubt the truth triumphant brings. When moral judgment leads the soul astray And mental darkness settles on our way, It surely is a gracious act to send A guide to show us to our journey's end. But-mournful story-man has heretofore Forgotten favors while demanding more! Forgotten God! Oh, what a flood of sin Through this wide door corrupts the soul within! Ingratitude for gifts the present brings Must make us thankless for the future things. To all God's messages by breeze or storms The earth attentive listens, and performs Its duty. But my blunted sense requires A plainer voice to tell what He desires. Oft have the birds and brooks, by nature taught, Asked me for God the homage of a thought. In vain they called, in vain the sun might rise And bear his peaceful message from the skies; And when tired nature slept, the nightly train Has asked my quiet heart for thanks in vain. With many voices all creation calls, But on my ears how dead her language falls! What spirit is it holding such a sway, That turns me thus from nature's God away; That thus the knowledge of his will shuts out, And even his very being makes me doubt?

What other worships, or what god less high, Can all my inward longings satisfy?

My dearest friend prepares a feast of love,
And calls me to it, but I will not move.
If to a fellow-mortal I should go
And thus desired my warmest love to show,
What if with stiffened neck and sullen eye
He gazed on vacancy, and passed me by?
But if he showed displeasure at my fame,
And could not bear the mention of my name,
And with aversion shunned my every friend,
And to my foes would willing audience lend,
And tried my merit to depreciate,
Oh, say, what better proofs of human hate?

But here is evidence that strikes with awe,
Proving me sinful by the holy law.
Do I the majesty of God degrade
And bow in worship to what He has made?
What star of hope undue attention gains?
What earthly object o'er my passions reigns?
Does wealth, or power, or pleasure's giddy race,
Shut out the glory of my Maker's face;
Or voice of beauty charm the captured ear,
And drown the sweeter music I should hear?

Not satisfied with what his word has given, Does fancy form a different God of heaven; And what consistent seems, do I thus take, And worship the deformity I make?

Lost to all reverence due, and lost to shame, Do I not lightly take my Maker's name? And though his love my time for work would guide, And for my soul a day of rest provide,
That all my worldly wishes may be still
And his eternal truth control my will,
Neglectful of that day do not I live
When to the world its precious hours I give?

Not only thus, to Him who life bestows The carnal mind its strange aversion shows; But even his image in our brother made, Our hate pursues with hostile arms arrayed. The kind restraints of parents it defies, And civil power before it trembling flies; For the red arm of murder it employs, And life and human happiness destroys. The honored soul with brutish lusts it fires, And fills the earth with its obscene desires. No other's claims its selfish nature feels. But boldly robs, or secretly it steals. It drives the truth back to its native sky, And leaves mankind the victims of a lie; Then, discontented, rolls its envious eyes, And covets all that social peace denies.

To evil motives born, thus down I go, In ignorance and sin, the paths of woe. A fiery gulf of wrath before me lies, And fiery wrath, behind, pursuing flies, Till God's once image is unknown and driven A foe destructive from the gates of heaven.

Oh, shall I sink to that unhappy state, To dwell with fiends in everlasting hate; Where tears of penitence can never start, Nor good impression move the callous heart?

Alive to evil, but to goodness dead, Oh, who would not the deeper darkness dread? In black despair, relieved not by a doubt, The light of hope is put forever out. Remembered mercies there no pains assuage, But only come to gnash the teeth in rage; And as in fire the writhing body burns, So from the flame the soul in torment turns. In vain it lifts its agonizing eye To pray for succor from the distant sky; In vain the visions of the blest appear, For pity drops no sympathizing tear, And heaven or hell no living form has seen To try that gulf impassable between, And there's no sacrifice of future pains Which God accepts, to purge our moral stains.

The justness of these figures man denies.
And yet, unfaithful figures are but lies;
For if by fiery burnings God would show
The dreadful sufferings in the world of woe,
And needless thus should frighten and deceive,
'Tis cruelty to ask me to believe.
But if rejected good I may receive
Is greater far than mortals can conceive,
Then, as the substance o'er the shadow great,
So future woe exceeds its figured state.

"What caused a hell?" bewildered reason cries:
"Rejected love," the word revealed replies.
"The love of God foresaw contagious sin,
And fixed this place to shut the subjects in;
Just as humanity itself removes
The spreading pestilence from those it loves.

'Twas love surpassing all that man can know Created life, in spite of all its woe; And such a love o'er fallen mortals yearns, And down to hell in fiery vengeance burns; And long as sin shall breed its foul desires, Protecting love must fan those wrathful fires.''

Perplexed with doubt, I call on thee, O grave, Dark as thou art, from darker woe to save. In thee no more may I my actions tell, Or if I live, O grave, be thou my hell. But not in reason's ear dare I to claim These awful words as used by God the same.

Suppose there is no future hell like this,
And every man must reach the heavenly bliss,
Then oh, what safety from a future fate,
Like fallen angels from their first estate?
To be secure, my only hope is found
When I to God by faith in Christ am bound.

The penalty annexed inspires with awe,
And both in earth and heaven gives life to law;
And endless punishment must run the course
Of broken laws unchanging in their force;
And one offense forever must remove
The guilty soul away from Perfect Love,
Unfit for union. Love itself rejects
Degrading terms with sin, and thus protects
The purity of heaven. It lifts the rod,
And drives the soul in banishment from God
In self-defense. What future art can heal
The open wounds which I already feel;
What future righteousness of mine remove
The stains of sin already on my love?

Where'er I turn, the law still meets my eye: "The soul that sinneth, it shall surely die." I look in vain God's mercy to implore Where lightnings flash, and Sinai's thunders roar. But moved by fear, I feel inclined to fall, And thus self-righteous on my Maker call: "Oh, have I not from vile transgressors kept, And at thy mercy-seat oft prayed and wept? No glaring sins my life thus far have stained; No fellow-mortals of my acts complained. Will God so good his anger then display, And drive me for such little sins away?" O soul deceitful, only look within, And see the very prayer you make is sin. 'Tis not the act itself your Maker tries. But in the motive all the merit lies. Why not appear in his appointed way? What better sacrifice than to obey?

My darkened conscience once with sin was pleased; Enlightened now, it will not be appeased. I fear God's judgments, and my spirit flies To shun the danger that around me lies. How good is God my peril to reveal, To make me fear, and thus his goodness feel! Oh, when I think that earth, and heaven, and hell Are moved for me, who can my feelings tell? I think of my perverse, ungrateful soul, And of the loved ones whom my acts control; Of gay companions laughing in the sleeve; Of gaping hell our spirits to receive; And then, like grating discords, jarring sin From day to day distracts my peace, and in The night my restless soul must sigh and weep, Thinking of death and hell, till fickle sleep,

With dreams of falling from some awful height, Flies from my lids, and from the morning light. My sins come up like threat'ning clouds spread out Between my soul and heaven; and then comes doubt; And then the voice of God, even though I pray, Rolls like the thunder of the judgment-day. I call for hope, but to my tearful eyes The trembling phantom, fear, before me flies. I ask my troubled mind if hope can die, And hear the voice of dark despair reply, Like clods upon a coffin, "Hope no more." Oh, then my eyes their pent-up waters pour, Until the fountain of my tears is dry, And then I feel that I would gladly die If hope could be restored. What now can save? For me there is no hope beyond the grave.

Ah, why from childhood is my life thus spared? Why not have died when I was then prepared? Back through the shadows of my grief and joy I see myself a pale and sickly boy.

A scorching fever seizes on my frame;
In childish tones I hear an angel name.
Her form bends gently o'er my little bed;
Her hands adjust the pillow for my head;
She sets the cooling cup of water by;
She breathes a prayer,—I hear her softly sigh;
Though silent night is flying fast away,
No drooping lids her loss of sleep betray.
Her prayer is heard. That Being she adores,
In sympathizing love her son restores.

Thus fevered oft, and panting for my breath, Affection snatched me from the jaws of death. Once, thus, a dream of fearful import came,—
"A world in judgment, and a world of flame."
An iron wall between these worlds arose;
This was the earth, and that the world of woes.
Shadows of spirits on the heated wall
Strove to fly over, but as oft would fall.
At length, a mighty spirit seemed to stand
High on the wall, with sharpened scythe in hand;
And as the men in compact numbers grew,
The blackened reaper swiftly downward flew.
In the vast multitude of woman born
He reaped, and threw aside like falling corn.
The scythe of death had made a passage wide;
Another stroke, it touched the dreamer's side.

Thus, when the mind may not its thoughts control, A force for good or evil moves the soul.

The dream is told. A mother's love can see
A warning in it from God's wrath to flee.
Oft on her lips there moved a silent prayer,
That God would for himself her son prepare;
And oft her winning voice and moistened cheek
Impressed such language as her heart would speak.

"My son, come listen to your mother's voice, And let me tell you how to make a choice Of pleasure. Little children such as you May learn to know deceitful things from true. All selfish pleasure mingles soon with tears, But doing good to others always cheers. To every healthy boy and girl that lives, A cheerful heart the Great Creator gives; Nor should we any gift of his despise, Since nothing suited to us He denies.

Religion, child, will never make you sad;
For all its purpose is to make us glad.
We come to Christ whene'er we learn of God,
Whether by smiles or by his chast'ning rod;
And oh, how pleasant should the lesson be,
In everything the love of God to see!
For such as you the Saviour's arms were wide:
'Suffer the little ones to come,' He cried.
His brightest image He can best impart
To those who have a tender, childlike heart;
Then hold to Him by his inviting word,
For those who early seek, shall find the Lord."

Oh, mother, mother, thou didst love that name! Can I thine acts for me before Him claim? With folded hands, and on your bended knees, Oh, did you not, to give your conscience ease, Send up for me a prayer of streaming tears, And offer me to One who surely hears? Did not the preacher from the holy word Tell you to bring your children to the Lord? And while beside the witnesses you stood, To make your promise to the Saviour good, Did not the holy man then pray for me, And in his loving arms take me from thee? His dripping hand did he not on me place As chilly water trickled down my face; And when he called my name in solemn tone, Did not the church my little spirit own? Ah, no one thus by proxy can believe, Nor thus with truth the sign of it receive.

In memory oft a village church I see, And hear its bell, as if it called for me. Here, all whose love or friendship I could claim As Christian worshipers, in union came; And might I not the truth from them receive—Their preacher hear, their form of faith believe? Might not he drop the precious seed on some Who hear, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come"? Deep in my heart such sermons linger still; Unbidden come and fade against my will. Then let me turn again my roving ear, While somewhat thus the man of God I hear:

"My fellow-trav'lers to the spirit-land, As an ambassador of Christ I stand Before you. By his Spirit and his Bride I am commissioned; and I dare not hide The least of my instructions. Danger prowls In unexpected places, or it growls From sudden ambush, as a beast of prev. Or walks, a seeming friend, along your way. Look on before, and see the cloudy sky, That shrouds the future from the keenest eve: And think how long your journey on the road Before you reach the spirits' last abode. Enough of that dark future God would show, To shun its danger, and its bliss to know. His word of inspiration is complete, And every case of all mankind will meet; And by its truth the Holy Spirit tries Whoever blinds its meaning, or denies.

"He sends me great, glad tidings to proclaim To all mankind,—to every human name. He calls the many,—and each one of you, And yet his choice embraces but a few. He gives you power and liberty to choose;
He offers love, and you that love refuse.
Ah, should you treat your earthly parents so,
How like a river would their sorrow flow!
Then harden not your hearts, but turn and hear.
All who can learn of God may now draw near.
He opens wide to you his book of truth,
And calls you to Him in your tender youth.
Not only hear, for this the devils do;
But hear, and learn to imitate Him too.
Learn from his wisdom how his gifts to use;
Learn from his judgments what you have to lose;
Learn from his condescension pride to spurn;
And from forgiving love repentance learn.

"Like Jesus pray, believing God will hear; Like Him, be not ashamed to shed a tear. Ye hungry souls, o'ercome with toil and heat, Come to the table freely spread, and eat. Here living waters for the thirsty pour; Come quench your fevered thirst, and thirst no more. Ye weary souls, worn out with doubt and care, He gives his Spirit to assist your prayer; Ye wandering poor, who have no covering shed, Your Saviour had not where to lay his head; And oh, ye rich, come make of wealth your friends. And use for God the talent that He lends. Those coins by which you here so proudly stand, Are all uncurrent in the spirit-land. Come, wise and foolish, come, ye great and small, The Bride invites, and hear the Bridegroom's call. The shortened time admits of no delays. Then let your lamps be burning in his praise.

Come ye who think your day of grace is o'er; Who grieve his Spirit till you feel no more; Who fear you have blasphemed that holy name, And nothing now but swift-winged judgment claim, The gray, cold ashes of affection turn, And try if now no covered spark will burn. For past offenses is there some regret? And some concern for your salvation yet? Whence else, except from God, could feeling flow To urge reform? Not from the realms of woe: Not from God's enemy, the carnal mind; Nor from the world with all its powers combined. Oh, may his love your full-grown strength engage! But if your hoary head is bent with age, And the declining sun is nearly set, Come unto Him,—He may receive you yet.

"The Spirit knocks; but like the wind that blows, So often heard, unheeded comes and goes. You hush the restless monitor within. And say, 'What mortal is there without sin?' A rap of death may sound upon your door; You pause awhile,—then, all your fright is o'er. Time passes on. Ambition calls your name To ride triumphant to the courts of fame. Awake or sleeping, you can ever hear The people's praises sounding in your ear. A mournful murmur rolls across your breast; The Spirit knocks. It will not let you rest. The world's broad avenues of pleasure then You seek in company with wicked men; And yet, you hear that haunting knock once more; But fear stands trembling, shutting up your door. As time rolls onward, wealth and friends have fled; Acquaintance gone, and hope is almost dead;

And now, while kneeling mercy to implore,
You hear again that knocking at your door.
Perhaps it is a friend you should not lose,—
A voice so sweet, you hardly dare refuse.
Oh, trust in Him who now your life maintains,
And give your guest whate'er your house contains!
Oh, listen, friends, to that inviting voice,—
That knock which makes the Christian's heart rejoice!
The slighted Saviour may not knock again,
And when you knock, your knock may be in vain.

"When a sweet infant on your mother's lap, Could you have seen in life your future map,— Your journeys, haltings, trials, and your sin, Your constant war without, and war within,— And viewed the Unseen Hand extending wide, To help in need, and for your wants provide, Would you have had no grateful thought to pay To Him who prospers and defends your way? Your mother's neck embraced,—your bright'ning eye,— Your clinging faith, and prattling love reply. No watchful mother could her life employ With greater pleasure to increase your joy, Than that Great Spirit watching from above, To see you happy in his gifts of love. Nor could that mother with more yearning heart Watch from her home your fading form depart, Than He who woos your confidence to win, Follows your soul till it is lost in sin.

"Lost to your home, and to your Spirit-guide, Your path grows dim,—the gloomy forest wide. The night comes on, and now, worn out with grief, You startle doubtful at a rustling leaf. How earnestly around your strained eyes stare! How coldly fear seems rising in your hair! Now to the right, and now the left you go, Wishing a friend, but looking for a foe. Your dizzy brain directs your way no more,— You pass the same old objects passed before. Its lengths unknown, the forest is more dense, And in its gloom you lose your common sense. A human voice,—a thrilling call you hear,— It is a voice familiar to the ear,— He knows your danger, and He bids you fly. How quick your ear! How loud is your reply! Such is your Saviour's voice,—your dearest friend; Then, oh, my friends, the cheering call attend! Sad and exhausted, with your efforts vain, Homeward return and feel its love again.

"You fold your arms inactive. From your sleep, Shipwrecked you wake upon the stormy deep. The darkness spreads,—the winds around you roar, Driving the blackened billows from the shore. Hungry and thirsty in the icy night, How longs your soul to see the morning light! Your eyeballs strain till sense and motion fail, To catch the glimmer of a friendly sail. But now a thunder sound falls on the ear, And wakened expectation waits to hear The signal-gun. Oh, how that sound you bless, And quickly show the sign of your distress! A ship appears upon the dawn of day, With swelling sails, cleaving its friendly way. Arouse, my friends, your Saviour passes by! Put out the signal of distress, and cry! For though the darkened sea of sin may roar, Bearing you swiftly from the heavenly shore,

Behold his gracious hand extends to save, As, spirit-like, He walks upon the wave; And 'mid the howling storm of death and hell He bids you come, and all shall yet be well.

"In a dark dungeon where the wicked lie, A captive rebel, you are doomed to die. You think of home,—your fears may make you rave; For, looking round, you find no one to save. Your prison wall your utmost strength defies, When thus a fleeting vision seems to rise. 'A glorious form appears in dazzling white, Wearing a coronal of rainbow light. The tenderest beauty dwells upon his face, And in his movements majesty and grace; All charming forms of life around Him move, And look on Him as one supreme in love. All sense and motion seem with each to vie. To give Him pleasure and exalt Him high; For you He lays his well-earned honors down,-His heavenly pleasures, and his brilliant crown. With upturned face to some Great Spirit near, In prayer for you behold that falling tear!' Oh, what a change! And is the vision true? Is He in that dark prison dressed like you? Has He his robe upon your body thrown, And bid you fly and leave Him all alone? Oh, condescending love! Oh, matchless grace! That one so good should take your guilty place! Unchained He leaves you on your prison floor,— Its bars are loosed, and opened wide the door. The vision fades, and yet you hear his voice: 'My Father draws you, make his will your choice.' Your wisdom blind neglects his friendly care, Your love, untaught, will not his mantle wear.

"The Bride invites, and there is ample room. Here let your early understanding bloom; And here, like grateful incense to the skies, May all your future sweetest odors rise! Your worldly thoughts a little while deny, And come up here to worship the Most High! Perhaps to you, while in this gate of heaven, Some vision sweet, like Jacob's, may be given; And while the angels downward come, and rise Upon this ladder, reaching to the skies, Some messenger of love, from realms of day, May be dispatched to wipe your tears away. Here of the Father you may daily learn, And from ungodly paths the better turn; For, as his unseen Spirit lights a flame Upon the hearts of those who praise his name, Perhaps his glance of love in passing by May be the light of your eternity. 'Tis here, for you, the Bride lifts up her hands, And as the angel at the altar stands, Her prayers arise from censers full of love, Like burning incense, to the throne above.

"Oh, think how long that lovely Bride has stood Pleading the merits of a Saviour's blood! For you, what sleepless nights, what restless days, To turn your wandering hearts in wisdom's ways! Hear how the fire of hate around her roars! And see the blood that from her members pours! Behold her, driven from the face of men,—Her food the roots, her shelter is a den! But all the war that men against her wage, And all the tortures of the devil's rage, Cannot her cords of love to Christ undo, Nor hush her interceding voice for you.

Now in her hands behold her buried face. As low she bends before the throne of grace; And then to you she turns her streaming eyes, And calls your wayward spirit to the skies.

"By all the power of beauty she appeals;
By all the love that Christ for mortals feels;
By all the strength that moral greatness shows;
By all the light that on the world she throws;
By all the glory that surrounds her home;
And by the fiery judgments yet to come,—
Oh, hear her voice, my friends!—repent and live,
And all your future life to Jesus give."

'Tis thus the gospel sounds to bring me peace,— Sincerely seeking it I would not cease. I stand outside and knock, but storms of grief Come pouring on me while I seek relief. All earth's possessions would be freely given,— All I can think of, for a place in heaven. But woe to me! Will God forgive the thought, So often like the devil's shadow brought Between my soul and Him, that I might buy His gracious gift with my morality? Ah, what have I his goodness did not give? He grants me mind, his mercy lets me live. My sufferings here can bring Him no delight, Nor after death be pleasing in his sight; Is there no work He will from me receive? His word replies, "Your work is to believe."

That work of mine I would attempt to do, And know its false foundation from the true; For since the devils evidence receive Of things unseen and in one God believe, My faith than theirs would have no wider scope, Unless united to my love and hope. But faith and hope, like sun and moon, may rise, Short'ning the shadows as they climb the skies, Till in the zenith comes the perfect day, When love shall drive these passing shades away.

When love of truth He makes my highest aim, What better sign that I his love may claim? The love of truth! Oh, what a power it brings To show the value of eternal things! To rend this sensual veil that hangs between These earthly pleasures and the things unseen! The spirit frame alone on truth can grow, And thence its future happiness must flow; Then even shipwrecked on a shore like this, What pleasing glimpses of eternal bliss!

And though man's life in lengthened shadows fell On earth's bright morning, yet it did not tell More of his God than shorter shadows cast At burning noon. From the dim ages past The twilight Star that shone their sky to bless Becomes to us the Sun of Righteousness.

If in the things of earth no faith I show,
How can my faith from heavenly knowledge grow?
But if earth's witnesses I may believe,
Why not the word of truth from God receive?
That holy word the rise of man relates,
And follows him through all his changing states:
Foretells the evil for a thousand years,
And helps his faith by what in time appears;
Foretells the good his God has for him done,
Through all the dangers that his life must run.

It shows his kind and providential care
For those who humbly bend in faithful prayer,
And down the course of time points on before
To tell of Him who all our sorrows bore.

O gracious Father, help my soul to see
Thy Son and Holy Spirit one with thee!
For thus to us thy name thou dost declare,
And only thus our way to thee prepare.
We call thee Father, and thy love divine
Doth call us gods and also sons of thine.
Then, as eternally it was thy plan
To join thy nature to the form of man,
That thus as gods we might be one with thee,
Why doubt thy movements as a Trinity?

O Son of God, descending from above, Help me to stretch my unfledged wings of love, And on thy word of truth support my way, To see thy glory in eternal day!

May I by faith behold thee on thy throne, As at the dawn of time thy presence shone Image of God the Father! From his light Thou art the first upon chaotic night To cast his shining shadow, and to show His unseen likeness to the life below.

All things in heaven, and in this world of ours,—Dominions, principalities, and powers,—Were made by thee. The shining worlds above For thee were filled with happiness and love.

But why that sound so mournful to the ear?
Why should the angels hush their songs to hear,
And wait with ready watch and darkening frown
To hurl the authors of the discord down

Beyond the realms of day? Ah, ghastly Death On love and beauty blows his tainted breath; And in the human ages, pain and sin, In every path of life, their march begin.

Saviour of men! Thy pitying eye foresaw Our ruined state from God's unchanging law; And love, in mercy, touched the Father's ear, With words like these we through the Spirit hear: "Behold I come to do thy will, O God!" Thine is the power and thine the righteous rod;² But since for me is each created thing,3 It well becomes me while I go to bring So many sons to glory, with thine aid, Through mortal sufferings to be perfect made.4 Wilt thou for me a body then prepare,5 That thus thy righteousness I may declare,6 And thus destroy with its expiring breath The works of Him who has the power of death?"7 Then thus, well pleased, the heavenly Father spake: "Thy throne, O God, as mine I ever make.8 The sceptre of thy kingdom shall be right;9 And thou, my Son, my wisdom and my might, 10 Thou ever-living Priest since time began, in And Mediator between God and man, 12 Let all the angels fall and worship thee."13 Adoring hosts then bend the willing knee, And shout the triumphs of the love divine, That thus for sinners could so brightly shine.

Spirit of God, who on the waters' face, Amid primeval darkness, moved, to place All things in wisdom's order, far in space As creature-life or moving shape could be, The deepest things of God were searched by thee.¹⁴ And when the lovely image of mankind Awoke to life upon the Father's mind, Well pleased, thou then didst offer it thine aid, A helping Spirit to the spirit made. ¹⁵ The Godhead joined in mortal life to man Was thus prepared to execute that plan, That on a world condemned to death could shed The smile of God, where moral darkness spread.

Spirit of God, all powerful to make;16 Spirit of Christ, who through the prophets spake; 17 Proceeding from the Father and the Son, 18 Thou art eternally with God as One.19 By thee the Son was as the Father seen, With no material veil of flesh between; But so much creature aid He then could take As might a witness of his presence make, And thus could Adam hear his voice divine, And thus his glory could on Moses shine.20 And when the fullness of the time had come, Sent as a spirit from his heavenly home, 2x Thus could He take a mortal form of earth, And of a virgin choose a human birth; And though his presence thus to man was given, His spirit yet could be with God in heaven.22

By means of water life in flesh is known, So spirit life by that of blood is shown; And as the spirit, blood, and water give A triune witness of the life we live, 23 So Father, Spirit, and the Son agree, Like soul, and life, and body, one in three; 24 For Christ, like us, by blood and water came, 25 A perfect man, and God with us the same.

And since no man could stand in other's stead,
"The woman's seed must bruise the serpent's head;"26
For thus cemented every soul in one
Was personated by the virgin's son.27

Our triple nature hanging on a breath, Who shall unite it when dissolved by death? Shall God his ever-living likeness plan To be defeated in the triune man, And earth detain the body in decay, While ever fly the angel parts away?

No perfect life in Adam could prevent
The heavy curse by Eve's transgression sent;
Nor could the death of any of his race
Redeem one soul nor yet one sin efface.
One man for one may die; but great indeed
Is He who can for guilty millions bleed.
None but the God supreme in power and bliss
Could make and execute a law like this.
His word unbroken, as a perfect guide
Begets my faith; and when He says He died
For my transgressions, if it prove untrue,
Where shall my hope again its fires renew?

Ye innocents, whose angels round the throne Behold the Father's face, why should you own A merit in that blood which God has given To cleanse from sin, and make us fit for heaven? Your life as sin, condemned in Christ, must die,—28 That life restored, He rose to justify;29 For innocence, just like a fallen grain, Must perish first to bear its like again.30 Your souls unclouded by the grosser clay May hear the gospel in the realms of day,

And though divided from their poisoned dust, May, like the angels, in the Saviour trust; ³¹ But if He lies a captive in the grave, No power unites you, and no faith can save. ³² He rose to claim the retributive rod; ³³ He rose to make us innocent with God. ³⁴ Then grant, O Lord, sufficient grace to see, As Spirit taught, how others came to thee. So shall my faith on their foundation stand; So shall I see to me thine offered hand.

Far backward through the misty course of life Behold our common father and his wife!
Clad with the skins of fleecy victims slain,
They stand together on the verdant plain.
A rough stone altar rises up before,—
The wood piled on,—a lamb is lying o'er.
The man approaches, lifts the sharpened steel;
The woman turns to hide her face and kneel;
A voice of promise issues from the dead:
"The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head."

As God directed, in that way alone Was Abel's faith on such an altar shown.

Before my mind the power of faith has brought An ancient prophet by the Spirit taught; The fire of God is darting from his eyes,—His finger pointed to the shining skies.

The listening multitude is struck with awe, And men still nearer to the speaker draw.

In burning words their wickedness he shows, And warns them to escape the coming woes. He tells of flaming saints, who, with the Lord, Are coming down to execute his word

Against ungodly men. The Spirit moves
Upon a thousand trembling souls, and proves
The power of God. Behold that man again!
His life of faith has cleansed his mortal stain;
For love to God and man his actions show,
And like an angel visiting below,
Death asks no tribute of him. Oh, how strange
To human faith was that immortal change!

He had a listener,—eldest of our race, Of mien majestic, and of thoughtful face; He had another,—serious, though young, Whose active love from faith like Enoch's sprung. Unlike the sons of God who wisdom spurned, And in the paths of heedless beauty turned, Among ungodly men, this rising man A closer walk with God by faith began. And when the earth with violence was filled, His patient faith a hundred years could build, Regardless of the insults at him hurled, Till death had hushed them by the deluged world. By mutual dangers on the rolling deep, - Faith fanning faith, a brighter flame must keep. Without a compass, rudder, or a sail To guide its course, if driven by a gale, Where shall the ark discharge its precious freight, And when beneath it shall the flood abate? Faith clings to God by promises secured, Beholds his power, and waits his time assured.

By ties of kindred blood, the earth again Begins its scenes of pleasure and of pain: And now the second father of mankind May on new altars other victims bind; And as their odors rise, confess with joy
The right of God to save and to destroy.
Thou first of men to whom was given the meat
Of bird and beast as the green herb to eat,
What type their blood reserved? Was it to show
Our life in God through Jesus Christ must flow?

In Noah's days, before my mind appears A godly man of nearly threescore years; With mind enlarged by what of men he knew, His faith in God from faith in mortals grew. My fancy paints him graceful, modest, tall, Possessing wealth, and much beloved by all; And hence the call those loved ones to forsake, As some unreal voice he would not take. And though no place the vision pointed out, And time and distance were alike in doubt, By faith upheld, determined to obey, He staggered not, but ventured on the way. And when he saw the Lord before him stand, And all around the smiling promised land, With title clear, he yet must force his claim, Though now no child succeeded to his name.

Oh, brave in faith! I see thy servant band, With flashing weapons in each upraised hand, And Sodom's conqueror before them flies, As shouts of praise from rescued captives rise. Victorious chief! What form is that divine Who blesses thee, and brings thee bread and wine? A "king of righteousness," a "king of peace," A "priest of God," "his offerings never cease." 'Twas thus the great Melchisedec appeared,— To see his day thy faithful heart was cheered.

The prophet's son and promised heir is born,—
Dark was the night for faith, but bright the morn,—
A child of beauty and of married love;
A child of aged life, God's power to prove;
A child of faith to stay the good man's choice;
A child of wealth, oh, who would not rejoice?
What new emotions now the parents thrill!
What tender thanks their grateful eyelids fill!
Twin soul, and image of the man and wife,
How long thy journey,—whence thy spirit life?
On mother's breast and father's neck you cling,—
Oh, could they show how much of joy you bring!

Oh, thou companion, father, friend, and guide, Whose trusting son is ever at thy side, Dost thou not with him every pleasure share, And wouldst thou not his every sorrow bear? What startling voice is that which now you hear? Why does that well-known form again appear? "Thy loving son by thine own hands must die." Thy tongue is dumb,—thou dost not ask Him why. Nor look, nor gesture, can as yet reveal The pent-up grief that thou alone must feel. Thy steadfast faith admits of no delay,-The morning comes, and thou art on the way. What unsuspecting love, what artless joy, For three long days thy constant thoughts employ! The dreadful mount is in the distance known,— Oh, hast thou not sufficient faith yet shown? "Here is the wood, my father, and the fire, But where's the lamb?" I hear the son inquire. Ouickening his step, the grieving sire replied, "Our God, my son, will for himself provide." How strong the stroke, and keen was sorrow's dart, Which in that question pierced the father's heart!

How strong was faith that still could persevere, And bind that son, without a struggling tear—That 'mid his prayers and his submissive cries, Could lift that gleaming dagger to the skies! Who can describe that loving father's joy To hear that heavenly voice that saved his boy? Now could he see by faith's prophetic eye The Son of God, who thus for man would die; And down the distant time, his listening ear Could agonizing words like Isaac's hear.

The Shiloh seen from Juda's tribe to rise Thus helps the spirit though its faith He tries, And makes us hold Him when we come to pray, Like Jacob wrestling till the break of day.

When turning Moses from the world aside,
To see that Wonder who would be his guide,
He lets him feel that if his speech is slow,
The power that calls him makes the language flow.
And though the prospect darkens to the eyes,
And fancied armies in the mind arise,
His name, JEHOVAH, He can yet reveal,
And "God, our strength," He makes the prophet feel.
And faith from sign to sign is made to rise,
And shut or open the chastising skies.

The wing of death that darkens Egypt o'er Lets in the sunshine on the Hebrew's door; And chasing hosts may threaten in their rear, With sea before them, and no refuge near; Yet faith can stretch its hand of power to save, And part for life or close for death the wave.

The fiery serpent round the Hebrew flies,— He feels its sting, and turns by faith his eyes To see that brazen serpent on the pole, Like Christ, thus lifted up to save his soul. O thou, his sin-atoning offering, Before his God thy body he would bring, And there acknowledge publicly his part Of cruel sin to pierce thy bleeding heart. And free in will, as thou didst him require, He brings thee, too, his offering by fire, And on the victim's head his hand he lays, To show the debt another for him pays. He eats no flesh whose blood for sin atones: Yet feeds on thee, and thus thy merit owns, For in thy righteousness alone must rise The odors from his burning sacrifice; Yet must the salt like holy life declare. As God had shown, should he his lamb prepare.

"By faith," he cried, "I see the mountain shake, And with my brethren in my terror quake, As rising up before that law divine, I see this dark, polluted soul of mine. Now in my last extremity of need, Who to my God for me will intercede? Where, Moses, is the prophet like to thee? O Daysman craved by Job, appear to me! Naught of myself from thee would I conceal; Come in my nature and my weakness feel; Come in the holiness of God above, And melt my heart in reconciling love. My Shepherd, Christ, wilt thou, like Moses, lead, For me, like him, when God is angry, plead; And through his fire consuming let me see That truth and mercy lock embraced in thee? Thy heavenly form, like Moses, I would know. What faith may need, so much thy glory show;

What faith needs not, as thou art passing by, Hide with thy hand, lest I behold and die."

As friendly guide-posts on the road I go,
From signs like these my faith is made to grow.
Oh, what a cloud of witnesses appear!
What heavenly voices on the earth I hear!
Spirit of prophecy! Oh, may it be
A witness, Lord, of what thou art to me!
Thou "Mighty God," and blessed "Prince of Peace,"
I search the Scriptures, and would never cease,
Till in the triumphs of thy love divine
With thee in glory thou dost let me shine.
Here I may read thy life as known on earth
Four hundred years before thy human birth,
And feel the greatness that could thus engage
So large a space in man's historic page.

A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,35 Not man's, but woman's seed, that Holy One.36 Jesus by type,—Immanuel his name,—37 For Him the honors of our God we claim.38 In Bethlehem of Juda to be born;39 Hail, mighty Saviour, hail, auspicious morn !40 The rightful heir to sit on David's throne,4x Let kingly honors to the child be shown.42 Come, princes, cassia, myrrh, and aloes bring, 43 Come seek his favor,—worship the great King.44 Behold his star! It guides you on the way.45 Hark! Glorious angels heavenly honors pay!46 Would you a knowledge of his advent gain? Till Shiloh come shall Juda's rulers reign; 47 And in the wilderness Elijah's voice Proclaims, "Messiah comes! Let earth rejoice!"48 A threat'ning danger soon impends the child: A voice of wailing sounds, both loud and wild. It comes from Rama,—it is Rachel's cry,—Unnumbered murdered infants round her lie. 49

But out of Egypt God must call his Son;50 His life a Nazarene must be begun.5x Of earthly wealth his parents not possessed,52 He learns to hope when on his mother's breast;53 For by mankind rejected and despised,54 His words are spurned, his rights unrecognized.55 As God ordains, while yet a tender youth He shows himself a witness for the truth;56 And as He comes to do his Father's will, All types of righteousness He must fulfill.57 Thus, by the sign of Jonah 'neath the wave,58 He shows his death and burial in the grave. On Noah's rising ark death's waters roll⁵⁹ To type the Ark of safety for the soul; And manna food the Word in flesh makes known.60 Sustaining life, which bread does not alone. He proves the tempter's power, and fasts and prays, 61 Like Moses and Elijah, forty days.

Appearing suddenly, as if from heaven, ⁶² The Spirit power is without measure given. ⁶³ He does not mingle with our worldly strife, But lives a lowly, meek, and quiet life. ⁶⁴ Made like Melchisedec without descent, ⁶⁵ That shortened life in doing good is spent. ⁶⁶ He feeds the needy with his spirit bread, And with the mourner, pity's tears are shed. ⁶⁷ The face of man is from Him turned away; ⁶⁸ He murmurs not, but turns to God to pray. ⁶⁹

Endowed with fear and knowledge of the Lord,⁷⁰
And quickened understanding of his word,
In wisdom, counsel, and in righteous might,⁷¹
He comes to us a Sun of spirit light.⁷²
In many parables He turns his speech,⁷³
Which, sharp as arrows, hearts of envy reach.⁷⁴
His voice is music to the unstopped ears,
And eyes restored express their joy in tears,⁷⁵
And multitudes of listening poor around
Hang on his lips to hear the gospel sound.⁷⁶
Upon an ass behold the lowly King!⁷⁷
The Just One comes, and will salvation bring!⁷⁸
In loud hosannas, children, raise your voice!⁷⁹
O daughter of Jerusalem, rejoice!⁸⁰

"How steep the grief!" How great the mental strain, From heavenly joy to depths of human pain! See how He kneels in agony to pray, "O Father, is there yet no other way?81 Behold, the traitor comes,—his price is paid;82 Help me to bear what thou hast on me laid."83 When to his God submissive faith appealed, Without resistance we behold Him yield.84 The sheep are scattered, and their faithful head,85 'Mid rabble shouts, is to the prison led.86 Against Him now the rulers counsel take,87 And falsehood comes her witnesses to make.88 Without resentment, silently He stands;89 See how they strike Him with malicious hands !90 They whip Him on the back! Oh, what disgrace !91 They pluck his hair, and spit upon his face !92 From prison now his judgment they must know:93 To death, with vile offenders, he must go.94

Accursed for us, He bears a weight of wood⁹⁵ Where Abraham o'er offered Isaac stood.⁹⁶

Upon that wood his body now is laid;97 Pierced are his hands and feet, and fast are made. 98 Typed by the brazen serpent lifted up,99 He drinks for us the dregs of sorrow's cup. 100 Behold the mocking multitudes around !101 The very words they speak, prophetic sound. 102 They laugh at Him,—the sneering lips they curl. 103 They shake the head, and gnashing, malice hurl. 104 While thus they mock, and at his sufferings stare, 105 His voice is lifted up for them in prayer. 106 As if from heaven to shut that shocking sight, The sun refuses now to give its light. 107 His very words from prophecy I take: "My God, my God, why dost thou me forsake?" 108 Upon his joints He feels his body strain; 109 His strength is gone, and sweat pours out from pain. 110 With thirst extreme He now is on death's brink:"" They give Him gall and vinegar to drink, 112

When thus He ended all his mortal woes, Behold them casting lots to part his clothes!¹¹³ Within his body is no broken bone,¹¹⁴ But through his side a sabre gash is shown.¹¹⁵ In burial three days with the rich He lies,¹¹⁶ But conquers death and rises to the skies.¹¹⁷

Now, O my soul, what further wouldst thou know A firm foundation for thy faith to show? Why should thy pride put on its hateful crown, And with the fallen angels drag thee down? The Lord, descending from his throne above, Has proved to us humility is love. A little world and humble birth He chose; With humble parents humbly fled from foes; In sweet submission, hope and faith He learned, And with the humble all his life sojourned.

By humble fasting, kneeling on the sod, In humble prayer He sought the will of God. An humble guest the bridegroom's heart to cheer, With humble mourners He could drop a tear; And to efface all vestiges of pride, With what humility for us He died!

O lovely temper, when I feel the sway
Of evil motives leading me astray,
Help me to ponder on the past, and see
The choice of wisdom was to dwell with thee.
Let pride like Cain's my tender conscience warn,
No sacrifice that God appoints to scorn;
But like the faithful Abel, humbly bring
Another's righteousness my offering;
Or, as Job's friends, my sacrifice prepare,
To gain acceptance through another's prayer.

In helpless efforts why should reason choose To spend its strength, and offered aid refuse? Or, if that aid alone was all my light, Is it not better than a mental night? Oh, may my God a lowly mind confer, That shall my brother to myself prefer! So shall I learn to rest on Christ alone, And feel his righteousness is all I own. 'Tis thus my spirit clearer light receives, And pride no more my trusting heart deceives, And all the glory of the world appears A passing pageant of a few short years, Such as our fathers saw, and such to be Like roaring billows chasing on the sea.

Swifter than light, my fancy upward flies, To find some open door beyond the skies, And thence to call the gracious Saviour down, My toiling faith with heavenly joy to crown. Unanswered there, as hopeless I am led To find Him coming from the mighty dead.¹¹⁸ 'Tis in my heart his word I must receive: He dwells with me as soon as I believe.¹¹⁹

For one, a Mediator cannot be. 1200
But God is one; and hence I must be free.
To hear through Christ his mediating voice
Giving to me a reconciling choice.
Through Him I see the Father's outstretched hand,—
He offers friendship first; and yet I stand 1211
Perplexed with doubt what answer I shall send,
To show my friendship through our mutual friend.

What means this fearful feeling of despair That stops exertion, and shuts out my prayer? Can Perfect Wisdom give to me commands Without the power to do as he demands; Or Perfect Love present to me a prize Only to mock me and to tantalize? We talk of God's decrees as bands of fate That fasten mortals in a sinful state; Yet, as his bride the loving bridegroom woos, So God his union with mankind would choose. As from the grace of God my knowledge flows, He calls me to improve what grace bestows; For not a man there lives with healthy brain But feels the power his actions to restrain; Nor has a nation been that had no law To punish crime, and vice to overawe. Does conscience smile upon this war within, And tell me God decreed that I should sin?

Is not his word of inspiration sent Commanding me, with all men, to repent?122 But if all men may not that word obey, Would He command his saints for all to pray? 123 From God alone all moral power begins124 To wake the dead in trespasses and sins; Yet not because He wills it must I fall, 125 But my resistance to his Spirit's call. Hast thou not shown us, O thou Perfect Love, The chief of sinners may thy mercy move?126 Strange as it seems, hast thou not made it so, Thy love conditional in Christ to show?127 Have I no power "to grieve," "resist," "refuse," Nor "quench thy spirit" nor "his aid to choose"? O Holy One, whose pleasure gave us breath, "Thou hast no pleasure in the sinner's death;" But while the course of mortal life shall run, Thy gospel must be preached to every one;128 And grace is offered by the Spirit's voice, Like Mary's grace, to make the needful choice.

Thou hast all power, O Lord, to change my soul; Oh, "help my unbelief," and make me whole! A Canaanitish woman in my need, Upon thy crumbs of bounty let me feed. Like Samson blind, for strength to thee I go, Though in that strength I perish with my foe; And lo! I follow where thy feet have trod, For though He slay me, I will trust in God.

Inspiring word of God! I turn it o'er And read it now, as never read before. My eyes are opened, and that word I see Like blazing sunshine of eternity.

There I have found, while hope attends my way,
The Holy Ghost assists my soul to pray.
With hope revived, my resolution grows,—
A gleam of light, a troubled ocean shows,—
My bark is moving to a distant shore;
And storms may come,—its anchor drags no more.
Thus, through his flesh, as through a veil, I see
My fastened hope secure in Christ may be.²²⁹

My hope renewed, with heavenly ardor burns,
For it has been with Jesus, and returns,
Singing the melodies of other spheres
And wreathed in their sweet garlands. Reason hears,
And with attention lifts its drooping head,
Pleased with the tidings from the mighty dead.
With holy promises my faith appears,
And love looks upward through its smiles and tears.
Oh that mankind the Saviour's name would own
And spread his joyful reign from zone to zone!
No longer deaf, that gracious name I hear,
Like angels' music to my raptured ear.
Earth's sweetest name,—it fills the human mind:
'Tis life, and joy, and home, and heaven, combined.

What price, what value, can my mind conceive, To show the world the favors I receive? Oh, shall my soul in tuneless numbers move, And simply all his glorious works approve? Strike high his praise, and let the angels hear! Sound deep the notes, and let the devils fear! Increasing gratitude shall ever tell My Great Creator hath done all things well. Thanks for the feeling heart He gives to praise,—Thanks for the thoughts on all his works and ways.

I thank thee for thy Spirit's aid, O Lord, And for the gracious knowledge of thy word. Praise Him, my soul, that thou wast made to fear; Praise Him, because He called thee to draw near; Praise Him who led thee through that darkened way Of deep repentance to the light of day; Praise Him for faith in his redeeming love, And for the trials sent that faith to prove; Praise Him for time his mercy to embrace, And for the growth in knowledge and in grace; Oh, praise Him for his providential care, And for the honor He confers on prayer! And when by death this mortal frame decays, Eternal thanks for life again to praise. Come, heavenly music, on my spirit move, And tune my thoughts in harmony with love. Come with the memories of other days, And gently make me think upon my ways. Like morning dew upon a drooping flower, Thus make me weep, yet prove thy strength'ning power. Come with the stirring notes of passing life, And brace my spirit in its mortal strife; And sweetly melting with the human voice, Oh, come, and make my grateful heart rejoice! Come, all harmonious instruments below, Let every note to praise my Maker flow.

Though thus my soul in gushing love would move, My daily life the signs of evil prove.

I try to walk, but feel my weakness still,—
The scenes of sin rush in against my will.
My dreamy eyes upon the Scriptures fixed,
The sacred truth with worldly cares is mixed,
And when I close my door and kneel to pray,
The world comes in,—my thoughts are snatched away.

Perhaps a false security is given To lure my soul, and cheat it out of heaven: For Satan's power extends o'er heart and mind. Wherever sin an open door may find, And shining like a messenger of light, He makes the truth perverted seem as right. A real serpent Moses' staff became, But, with enchantments, Satan did the same. What countless millions have by altars stood, And sacrificed to some imagined good! Oh, dreadful state, to feel that all is well, My sins remitted, and yet sink to hell! But when I think of that angelic host Once loved by thee, O Lord, but now are lost; And of the loved ones in thy likeness made. With hostile arms against thee now arrayed; And of the charges in thy word to prove Our faith until the end, I feel thy love Would not permit these warnings thus to be Merely to frighten man. O Vine, in thee Am I a branch whose tender leaves were green, But withered now: no fruit is on me seen: Or do my acts thy Spirit's blossoms prove, And grow and ripen in thy sunshine love? Have I in heaven my spirit treasures laid, And sure my calling and election made? Have I my soul with heavenly wisdom filled, And do I on the Rock of Ages build? As through this wilderness of sin I go, By prayer and fasting do I meet the foe. And struggle onward through each gloomy night, And wait with patience for the morning light?

No outward signs I see but love alone, By which the children of the Lord are known;

And all may know them in the great highway, Making the tracks of love as they obey. Love made the law, and knowledge of its signs, Like landmarks old, the realm of sin defines. Begotten of the Holy Ghost through love, His spirit child, my future life must prove. 'Tis thus the change upon my soul I view,— The organs old, but all their motions new. He touched my harp,—'twas discord to his ear: He tuned its strings, and listens now to hear; And softly mingling with the heavenly praise, The unison of love each note obeys. Because He loved me first, a child of woe, All helpless then, his precious love to know, He gave me knowledge which my heart might move To love Him too. He kindled with his love The light by which I saw his loveliness. Here is a love unstained by selfishness, Unspotted from the world. Oh, do I prize The souls of men so precious in his eyes, And is it my delight to see them shine Like costly jewels at his throne divine?

Cold as I am, to thee, my Lord, I cling;
To thee, O Sun, my shivering soul I bring.
Thou art my life,—oh, where else can I go?
Outside of thee I sink to endless woe;
Outside of thee the Father will not hear,—
None else, for me, before Him can appear;
Then, though my love is mixed, in mercy deal,
And put not out the little fire I feel.
But, oh, my God, my future life control;
Appoint my changes, purify my soul;
And by thy lamp of life, to me reveal
The plain impressions of thy Spirit's seal.

I see them dimly, as through selfish dust; But hope revives,—the marks are thine, I trust. Now, from the new moon to the full of love, Around my earthly orbit I would move, And feel in every phase, both dark and bright, The same eternal Sun give heat and light.

Oh, could my dreaming spirit go before
And view the real scenes when life is o'er,
How earnestly each day it would prepare
To fly those horrors, and those joys to share!
How would it gaze on every light and shade
The word of truth of future things has made!
And in temptation's dark and trying hour,
How often here 'twould come for light and power!
By prayer, and praise, and by what words I know,
Let me go on and in their practice grow;
For all my powers of life I now engage,
And war, unceasing war, with sin I wage.

To satisfy my conscience, I will go Faith in the Trinity myself to show; And when I feel the water round me move,—Sign of the Spirit's purifying love,—I then shall sink, and rise above the wave, To plant my Saviour's banner on the grave. 130

O Christian brethren, here's my heart and hand: I ask admittance in your faithful band; And may some fitting place for me be made Where living stones in love cement are laid! Outside are deserts and a barren ground,— I come where food and water may be found. Outside I hear a wild and ravening cry, And with the flock for safety I would fly.

Though scattered much the sheep appear to be, Call me with those, O Shepherd, nearest thee.

There, in obedience to his holy word, I may approach the table of the Lord. But not unworthily, with roving mind, Or temper mirthful, or with thoughts unkind, Or ignorant of what it means to show; But with discernment I must humbly go, And eat that bread the dying Saviour gives, And drink his blood, by which my spirit lives. Through all the desolations of the past, The Christian's faith before and backward cast, Has prized these tokens of a dying friend, All powerful to give and to defend. The shafts of wit, and all of Satan's art, Could not induce him from these signs to part: And death in vain its cruel pangs would bring,— Stronger than death, here faith could always cling.

Since from my heart the issues are of life,
Death, only death can end this fearful strife.
I stumble,—sink inactive,—oft would fly;
But, "Onward! onward!" is the Spirit's cry.
Victorious saints in heaven are looking down;
My Judge holds out to me a glittering crown;
The morning comes,—the evening fades away.
What of the night,—what have I done to-day?
The word of judgment o'er and o'er I turn,
My present and my future state to learn.
No new decrees are issued from the throne;
But from this word my sentence must be shown.
Backward I look and see the troubles past,
And with those clouds my present skies o'ercast;

Then forward look toward the silent tomb,
And add upon to-day the future gloom.
Then judgment comes,—"Oh, why this sinful care?
Sufficient for each day its evils are."
Why paralyze with gloom the passing time,
And swell the evil with increasing crime?

The tempting voice of pleasure leads astray; I turn aside, and parley on the way; May venture money on an idle chance; Attend the ball-room, and in spirit dance; Consume my time with some fictitious tale; Dally too long with spirits weak and frail; Or, with the witty may desire to shine, Or at the dram-shop drink a glass of wine. All such appearances of evil show What sort of seeds upon my heart I sow, And judgment comes whene'er that prayer is said: "Into temptation let me not be led." Whenever evil would itself disguise. The word of judgment all my need supplies. "Do I the spirit of that word obey, And thus the honor of my God display?"

Though oft condemned, yet blessed words I hear In judgment given my drooping soul to cheer. "All things are yours," and through the Saviour's blood "All things shall work together for your good." Oh, may my soul in faith triumphant rise, And thank the Lord for what before me lies! Oft as my Judge in love shall chasten me, His righteous judgment for my good shall be; And even death, that darkest door of woes, Shall for my future good upon me close.

O Christian, drifting to an unknown shore, When shall thy changes and thy war be o'er? To pass from life and mingle with the dead Fills me with gloom, and oft the change I dread. I cling to life, and coming ills would try, Though faith assures me it is gain to die. As when my Saviour's life was offered up, He prayed for strength to drink this painful cup: Like me then tried, for me He now can feel, And all his power o'er death to me reveal. A dying grace my Saviour then will bring, And from my trembling soul remove this sting; And through the gloom that sunders earthly ties, Will make my parting precious in his eyes. And since the gracious Father judgeth none, But all the judgment giveth to the Son, Long as his right to pardon shall endure, God's perfect justice makes my soul secure; And though my body food for worms may prove, Death cannot separate me from his love.

Unchained from matter, subject to his will, My joy shall be God's purpose to fulfill.

There earth's relations end. No spirit wife¹³¹
Nor spirit husband in that future life,—
No sinful likeness of the flesh shall be,—
No pigmies, giants, nor deformity.
Nor shall I there desire to look below
To see the once beloved in worlds of woe;
For all my selfish wishes there shall end,
And whom God loves, he only is my friend.
Then, oh, what need of earthly ties above,
Where all is union,—all like Christ shall love?
Here darkly through a glass I know in part,
But there each face shall answer to each heart;

And spirit saints to me shall there be shown, Whom I shall know, as even I am known. ¹³² There love reversed on no one's self shall rest, But bliss shall be to see another blest. And wheresoever in that world I go, My active soul the love of Christ shall show, Till with his shining saints He shall return To raise their bodies, and this world to burn.

What strange, what fearful sights are in the skies! It is the time the Christian dead must rise. 133
The darkened sun but dimly brings the day, 134
And moon and stars are vanishing away.
Now shall we hear that voice of sweet accord: "Come up, my dead, my living, to your Lord." 135
The trembling earth obeys the word of God,
And clattering bones break through the yielding sod;
And ocean's tide has parted from the shore,
From caves and coral-reefs to gather more,
And every soul descending from on high
Joins a new body that can never die.

O earth, no saving salt in thee remains; 136
Destruction sweeps thy cities and thy plains;
Thy boiling oceans hissing vapors pour;
Thy winds unchained in deafening fury roar; 137
Thy wasting mountains vomit waves of fire; 138
The earthquakes raise thy burning valleys higher;
And all thy scenes of pleasure and of pride
Lie buried 'neath the smoking lava tide. 139
But in the glowing vault, all safe from fear,
That host of earth's immortals reappear.
Nearer they come,—the fires have died away,—
The night has fled, and dawns millennial day.

"Revive, O Earth!" The tuneful echo flies; And smiling earth with all things new replies. 140

Here we shall reign with Christ a thousand years. ¹⁴¹ The time so short, a day to Him appears; But all the other dead in darkness lie
Until that blissful epoch passes by. ¹⁴² How we are priests, and over whom we reign, ¹⁴³ I wait in faith my Saviour to explain; And yet this lesson from that truth we draw, "To judge the angels" we must know the law. ¹⁴⁴

Alive in Christ before we yield this breath, We know our places at the gates of death; And when the thousand years of bliss are o'er, And Satan shall be loosed on earth once more, Safe from apostasy, in hope we wait¹⁴⁵
The general judgment of the small and great.

What multitudes are those of human birth,
Immortal made, who darken now the earth?¹⁴⁶
Are they the unconverted dead below,
Now loosed with Satan from the shades of woe?¹⁴⁷
May heathen children on the earth return
The righteousness by faith in Christ to learn?¹⁴⁸
And will they not the Saviour yet receive,
Nor his immortal witnesses believe?¹⁴⁹
Deceiver and deceived in arms arrayed,
On the broad earth a hostile line have made;
And while around his saints they threat'ning close,
God's angry flash devours the daring foes.¹⁵⁰

Oh, now that long-expected, awful day appears That-brings the highest hopes and greatest fears.

Upon his cloudy throne of dazzling white. Our Judge descends in majesty and might;151 And countless hosts of flaming angels near. To execute the judgment, now appear. 152 Then sounds like crashing worlds the trumpet call. To gather quick and dead, both great and small. As if unclean before the Maker's face. 153 The shining vault has vanished from its place, And from the fearful scene the earth has fled, Leaving behind it all its risen dead. 154 Before the Judge, as if on air, they stand, And take their proper places on each hand. 155 No world is seen; yet, on the left, close by, A darkened cloud is spreading broad and high; And soon a mingled wail and fearful vell Make known the spirits who have come from hell. 156

Silence is made. Then, like a stream of light Passing before the throne in every sight, A flying roll seems opening more and more, With all creation's scenes there pictured o'er. 157 Here are the love and power of God displayed, When first the spirits of the skies were made; And to that book must turn our every eye, To see the goodness of the Deity. Oh, how this body I shall see abused! My soul, how darkened !--appetites misused; From truthful nature senses turned away, And all my thoughts from duty gone astray! Unfolding days and nights, in silence there What knowledge I refused again declare. But also there these shadowy thoughts arise, To praise the Author of the earth and skies; And while to Christ as through his works I look, He marks me righteous in "creation's book." 158

The scene has passed, and, spreading like a sky, The book of providence has fixed each eye; For here, since good and evil first began, Is seen the life of angels and of man. The rise and fall of nations reappear, As checked ambition turns its red career; And judgment comes in providential care, The bad to punish, and the good to spare. To fill the wants of all as they unfold, Again God's open hand I there behold; And earthly parents there, again so kind, Just as they were, are pictured on the mind; And when my thoughts like theirs began to flow, And something of my Maker I might know, A pictured child, I bend my little head, As to the Lord, the prayer He taught is said, And like a stranger with no other friends. I cling to those whom God's protection sends.

But oh, what shame now mantles on my face, The wayward conduct of that child to trace! What wrath and strife,—what envyings and lies, And filthy thoughts, from that young heart arise! What words profane shut out the words divine! What vanity! Oh, is the picture mine? Where is some secret place to hide and pray, And wash with tears the hateful sight away?

The picture changes. That repentant child Looks on the face of God as reconciled. He founds his judgment on the Saviour's claim, And a kind Providence accepts his name.

Thus passing, passing, is that wondrous book, On which for judgment every soul must look, Till like a record of the two gone by,
I see the "book of life" before me fly.
Attention is absorbed. I cannot turn
The judgment of another soul to learn.
As if proceeding from the opening scroll,
The living words like speaking thunders roll;
And every nation turns a listening ear,
And conscience answers as these words we hear:

"When on the earth, did you in worship kneel, And all your poverty in spirit feel; Or, Christ refusing, were you moved by pride To choose your reason as your only guide? With feelings lowly and a spirit meek, Did you the good of all your neighbors seek; Or, with a stiffened neck and selfish heart, Withhold what once you could with ease impart? Did you then hunger after righteousness; Or ask the world your empty soul to bless? If wronged or injured by your fellow-men, Did tender mercy rule your spirit then; Or did you quickly lift your vengeful arm, Impatient to return them equal harm? For purity of heart did you then seek; Or, unconcerned, obscenely think and speak? And did your love to God and man increase As on the earth between them you made peace; Or, carelessly, did you there waste your life, 159 Or spend it actively in stirring strife?"

Such are the questions. Must their answers be The final judgment for eternity?

O Righteous Judge, how can I dare to stand, Sinful as life has been, at thy right hand?

Do with me, Lord, as seemeth to thee best;

Let God be just, though I may not be blest.

All voices hush. The books the angels close;
The scales of heaven adjust our joys and woes;
And on the right the Judge's searching eyes
As a refining fire each spirit tries.
Some works like gold remain; and some like hay
Built on our faith, like smoke now pass away. 160
Though scarcely saved, oh, let my soul rejoice, 161
For I can hear my Saviour's gracious voice
Inviting us, his Father's blessed heirs,
To come inherit what his love prepares! 162
Then to the left the Lord in judgment turns,
As from his face consuming anger burns;
And oh, what anguish pierces every heart
That feels accursed, and hears the word "Depart!"

As op'ning heaven illumes the distant skies, I see the King of many crowns arise; 163 And all his saints in honor's order bright, By strong attraction follow in his light, Till, in a place which mortals never knew, The kingdom long prepared comes into view.164 Our mortal powers cannot the scene conceive, Neither if told could we the words believe. 165 As angels to the earth may come and go, Such power on us the Saviour will bestow; 166 And long as with Him we may there abide, What suits each happy soul He will provide. 167 From world to world whatever Christ may own Will to the heirs of glory then be shown; 168 And like the stars that differ now in sight, So are the saints in endless life and light. 169



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